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THE EARNEST OF THE INHERITANCE;

OR,

A CHRISTIAN'S MEETNESS FOR GLORY;

A SERMON,

By JOHN BRADFORD, A. B.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

[PRICE SIX-PENCE.]

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A SERMON,

PREACHED IN

ORANGE-STREET CHAPEL,
LEICESTER-FIELDS,

BY

JOHN BRADFORD, A. B.

Late of WADHAM COLLEGE, OXFORD,

ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1790.

—Ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise, which is the earnest of our Inheritance until the Redemption of the purchased Possession.—EPH. i. 13, 14.

L O N D O N :

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A. B. K. Y. O. N.

OF THE TRINITY CHURCH
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

JOHN A. B. K. Y. O. N.



—To which is added the History of the
Church of the United Methodist
Church in the State of New York

JOHN A. B. K. Y. O. N.

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A
S E R M O N.

COLOSSIANS I. 12.

*Giving thanks to the Father, which hath made
us meet to be partakers of the inheritance
of the saints in light.*

STRAIT is the gate, and narrow is the way,
which leadeth unto life. The vulture's eye
cannot see it; no natural man, however
possessed of the greatest natural abilities, or
however diligent in his researches after truth,
can, by his wisdom, find it out; yet the
wayfaring man (though a fool in his own
esteem, or the esteem of others), being taught
of God, shall not err therein.

The path of truth lies directly between two extremes—legality on one hand, and licentiousness on the other. We can never walk uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, unless enlightened with divine light, and continually upheld by divine power. If left to ourselves, and to the vain reasonings of our own minds, there is not an error, however absurd, into which we may not fall. Have we not daily instances of those who *for a time* appeared to run well, who seemed very zealous and very religious, but who are now declined from the profession they once made, and are sunk either into Antinomian security, or else into the dregs of legality? Have we not instances of others, who, having once made the strictest profession, are now living habitually, openly, and presumptuously, in the practice of some known sin? What shall we say to these things? I would say, with St. Paul, “Never-
 “ theless the foundation of God standeth
 “ sure, having this seal—the Lord knoweth
 “ them that are his;” or I would say, with St. John, “They went out from us, but they
 “ were not of us; for, if they had been of
 “ us, they would no doubt have continued
 “ with

“with us.” Perseverance only can prove us to be living branches in the living vine: every unfruitful branch (such is every one who makes a profession of the gospel without being vitally united to Christ), sooner or later, shall be taken away. Needs must that offences come: we are likewise told expressly “that there *must* be also heresies;” and for this reason, that they who are approved may be made manifest.

Very contrary opinions prevail respecting the Christian’s meetness for glory. One says, our meetness is all in Christ, and that too in such a manner as if there was no necessity for any change to be wrought in us, nor of any gracious influences to be received by us. Another says, the soul, after justification, is continually to grow in a meetness for glory; as if we were not fit for heaven the moment we believed. I consider each of these opinions as equally erroneous. The necessity of a real change, to be wrought in the soul by the operation of the Holy Ghost in the revelation of Christ, is to me one of the first and fundamental principles of the gospel. In my opinion, no one can be said to preach the

gospel who does not particularly insist upon this change. If the gospel is *power*; if it is the *power of God*, the rod of his strength; then, if that power is not insisted upon, the gospel is not preached; and, if that power is not experienced, the gospel is not known.

To say that a believer must grow in meetness, implies that he was not meet for heaven as soon as he was justified. This opinion must tend to bring the soul into darkness, distress, and bondage; and so to raise questions and scruples in the mind, as greatly to strengthen unbelief. By being taught to look into ourselves for a growth in meetness, we are taught to measure ourselves by ourselves, and to compare ourselves among ourselves; which, St. Paul says, is not wise. This is not looking unto Jesus; this supposes our meetness to consist in gracious qualifications, infused habits of grace, or in good tempers and dispositions, rather than in our union with, knowledge of, and love to, Christ, by the indwelling of the Spirit, and by a participation of the divine nature.

In speaking from the words of my text I propose to observe the following method :

I. I would shew what is meant by the inheritance of the saints in light.

II. What is our meetness for this inheritance.

I. I would shew what is meant by the inheritance of the saints in light.

An inheritance, in the common acceptation of the word, means any worldly possession which descends by heirship.

To understand what is meant by the inheritance of the saints, it will be necessary previously to inquire who are saints.

This inquiry is necessary, not only to determine the nature of the inheritance, but also to stir us up to an examination whether this character belongs to us, whether we are interested in this inheritance ; for what does it signify to you or me who is interested in this inheritance if we are not ? There is no true religion where Christ is not received and

enjoyed. It was the doctrine taught by Balaam; "I shall see thee, but not now; I shall behold thee, but not nigh." The same doctrine is taught by many in our day. It is the doctrine of unfelt faith, and an unapplied Christ.

We are not to conceive of the character of a true faint from the list of those who have been canonized by the pope, and who are called saints in the church of Rome; for very few of these were really the faints of God. The name of faint is generally given to the apostles and evangelists, by which some may be led to suppose that the name belongs *exclusively* to them; I would therefore observe, that this name belongs to the prophets and patriarchs as well as to the apostles and evangelists. Isaiah, and all the other prophets, were as much faints as Peter and the other apostles of our Lord; in short, the character of faint belongs to all who have believed; and it will belong to all who hereafter shall believe.

Some conceive of the character of a faint as if he was one who pretended to be better
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in himself than others; but this is so far from being true, that none entertain a worse opinion of themselves than those who are really the saints of God. Job was a saint; and the language of his heart was this; "I am vile; I abhor myself; I repent in dust and ashes." Paul was a saint; and what was his language? The chief of sinners—"For this cause," says he, "I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe."—A saint is so far from being one who supposes himself better than others, that you may depend upon it he is no saint who can say to any man,—Stand by—come not near to me—I am holier than thou.—Such as these, God says, "are a smoke in my nose; a fire that burneth all the day."—He who can thank God that he is not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, &c. is not a saint, but a Pharisee. He is one of those who are pure in their own eyes, but never were washed from their sins. The saint knows that, whatever sins others may actually commit, he, if not restrained by grace, might do

do the same; for he feels that in his heart are the seeds of every sin.

There will be saints upon the earth as long as God has a people who shall believe in his name. These are saints;—not by virtue of any inherent holiness in themselves, but by virtue of their union with, and relationship to, the Lord Jesus Christ. These are saints, because they are partakers of Christ's holiness, and because the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of holiness, dwells in them.

Some talk of inherent holiness in such a manner as if there was a stock of grace put into our hands, and intrusted to our care and management; so that, instead of receiving continually out of that fulness which there is in Jesus, the stock is in ourselves. This opinion appears to me to answer exactly to the gainfaying of Corah and his company. When those men rose up against Moses and Aaron they cried out, "The congregation is "holy every one of them." This was a blessed truth, as it respected the true church, the true Israel of God; these, indeed, are a
chosen

chosen generation, a holy nation; these were chosen in Christ, that they might be holy; but these are no otherwise holy than as considered in him, and as partakers of his holiness. It is plain that Corah and his company meant that the congregation were holy in themselves—without their high-priest—because they would have turned the high-priest out of his office: it is exactly the same in our day. Those, who know nothing of their union with Christ; who never knew experimentally what it was to enjoy communion with him; who were never made partakers of his holiness; are the loudest in crying out for inherent holiness. And may we not say to these, as was said to their predecessors of old, “ Seek ye the priesthood “ also ? ” Those, who know themselves and their own hearts, and are made savingly acquainted with the Lord Jesus Christ for themselves, will always be most forward to renounce all pretensions to any holiness but what they have in, and receive from, Christ. We may observe this in Peter, who, when he had cured a lame man, lest the people should suppose that there was some extraordinary virtue in him, immediately cried out, “ not by “ our power or holiness.” We may observe the

the same in Paul, who, when he had been giving a black catalogue of the vilest characters; lest any should suppose that he was making a comparison in order to shew how much better he was; broke off abruptly with this question, "Are we better than they?" and answers immediately, "No; in no wise."

True faints are chosen vessels of mercy; elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father; predestinated to the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ; set up from everlasting in Christ; heirs of God, as being joint heirs with Christ; so that, as St. Jude says, they are "sanctified by God the Father."

True faints are likewise said to be sanctified in Christ, who of God is made unto them SANCTIFICATION, as well as wisdom, righteousness, and redemption. For this cause he took our nature upon him, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. As the children therefore were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; so that "both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one." For this cause Christ is expressly said

said to have suffered without the gates: “ As
 “ the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is
 “ brought into the sanctuary by the high-
 “ priest for sin, are burnt without the camp,
 “ so Jesus, that he might sanctify the people
 “ with his own blood, suffered without the
 “ gate.” By the offering of the body of
 Jesus *once*, for all the sins of all his people,
 the whole church, collectively as a body,
 was sanctified; for “ he loved the church,
 “ and gave himself for it, that he might
 “ wash it and sanctify it.”

True saints; as they are said to be *sanctified*
 by God the Father, and to be *sanctified in*
Christ; so they are personally and individually
sanctified by the Holy Ghost, as the apostle
 says, “ But ye are washed, but ye are sancti-
 “ fied, but ye are justified, in the name of
 “ the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our
 “ God.” It is by the indwelling and oper-
 ation of the Holy Spirit that every believer is
 separated from the world, and sanctified as a
 vessel meet for the master’s use; for, as St.
 Paul says, our bodies are the temples of the
 Holy Ghost; and this Spirit, dwelling in us,
 purifies the heart by faith. We are no
 otherwise

otherwise faints, than as united with, and related to, the Lord Jesus Christ, and as his Spirit dwells in us, purifying our hearts, and sealing us to the day of redemption.

From hence it appears that true saints are those who, according to God's eternal purpose, and the grace given them in Christ Jesus before the world was, are called in time to the knowledge of Christ—are actually made partakers of the Holy Ghost—are passed from death unto life—are translated from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son—are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God—are brought nigh unto God by the blood of Jesus, having their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience—are created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath foreordained that they should walk in them. These serve, not in the oldness of the letter, but in newness of spirit.—These, as their understandings are enlightened in a measure to know the will of God, so they find and feel it their happiness to do it—*these*, I say, find their happiness to be in proportion to their obedience—not *for* their obedience,

dience, but *according* to their obedience, *i. e.* according as their minds are brought into subjection to Christ, and in captivity to the gospel.—According as they are brought to live in dependance upon the Lord for all things, and to receive daily supplies out of that fulness which there is in Jesus, so proportionally they find and feel that there is all joy and peace in believing.—This is their happiness, to taste and see that the Lord is good, to admire the riches of grace, and to rejoice in his great salvation.

Having thus far explained what I mean by a saint, I now proceed to shew what their inheritance is.

St. Peter calls it an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven, *i. e.* the final and full possession, the uninterrupted enjoyment of this inheritance, is in reserve. St. Peter cannot mean that nothing is received nor enjoyed in this life, for that would be to contradict the plainest testimony of scripture; for it is written, We which have believed do enter into rest.—The believer is said to be sealed with
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the Holy Spirit of Promise—he has the earnest of the inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.—“ Faith is the substance “ of things hoped for, the evidence of things “ not seen.”—As the grapes of Eschol were an earnest to the Jews of the promised land, so the believer enjoys in this life a foretaste of the joys to come. The public and glorious manifestation of the sons of God will not be till that great day when the Son of man shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, with his holy angels, to present himself, and the children whom the Father had given him, perfect as one body before the throne; yet there is a manifestation of our sonship and adoption in Christ made to every believer, personally and individually, in this life; as it is written—“ Because ye are sons, God “ hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into “ your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.”—It is by this spirit of adoption that we can look upon God as a reconciled Father, and as such we can draw near to him acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

The Lord gave to Abraham the land of Canaan as the lot of his inheritance, “ by
“ promise ;

“ promise.” The apostle lays particular stress upon this in his epistle to the Galatians; “ If, says he, “ the inheritance be of the law, it is “ no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.”—Canaan was a type of the Christian’s inheritance. As the Jews enjoyed all the good things of that land *temporally*, so the believer enjoys all good things *spiritually* in and from Christ. As the Israelites “ possessed themselves of great and “ goodly cities which they builded not—houses “ filled with all good things which they filled “ not—wells digged which they digged not— “ vineyards and olive-trees which they planted “ not”—so the Christian, without any labour or pains on his part, is brought into the actual possession and enjoyment of all those benefits and blessings which were procured for him by Christ; and by union with him he is brought into the actual possession and enjoyment of God himself; for, as God’s chosen people are expressly called *his* inheritance, so God himself is called *their* inheritance. Moses pleads with the Lord for his people upon this ground: “ Lord,” says he, “ they “ are thy people and thy inheritance.” And it is said in another place, “ The Lord’s por-

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“ tion

“ tion is his people ; Jacob is the lot of his
 “ inheritance ;” on the other hand, the
 Psalmist says, “ The Lord is my portion.”

From these plain testimonies of scripture,
 I infer, that God himself is the inheritance
 of the saints. It is certain that he made him-
 self over to them in covenant.—“ This is
 “ the covenant that I will make with them,
 “ saith the Lord—I will be to them a God,
 “ and they shall be to me a people :” and
 in another place he says, “ I will dwell in
 “ them, and walk in them.”

From considering God as the portion and
 inheritance of his people, I would draw this in-
 ference :—that whatsoever advantages any one
 may derive from his worldly inheritance, those
 advantages the saints derive spiritually from
 God himself, who is their inheritance.

Do men, for the most part, place great
 dependance upon their riches ? The saint,
 in a measure, is enabled to place his depend-
 ance upon God himself. Though he may
 feel his heart at times going out after some
 foolish scheme or fancy, yet the Lord gives
 him

him to see his folly, and then he is covered with shame and confusion of face, that he should forget his good God and Saviour, who had hitherto defended him with his favourable kindness as with a shield.

Do men, for the most part, derive their honour from their worldly possessions? The Christian's honour cometh from God only.—And, as his inheritance is great, so his titles are high and honourable. He is a king and priest;—he is born of God;—he has the grandest equipage, the most numerous and splendid retinue; for angels are ministering spirits appointed to wait on the heirs of salvation.—Such honour have all the saints.

Do men, in general, furnish themselves with all necessary supplies, according to their rank and station, out of their worldly possessions? In like manner the saints draw all their supplies from God himself, “who supplies
“all their needs out of his riches in glory by
“Christ Jesus,” who is every thing to his people which they can want or wish. Eyes to the blind—feet to the lame—to those who have no might he increases strength.—He

fillet the hungry with good things, while the rich he sends empty away.—He is to the thirsty soul a well of water springing up unto everlasting life.—He clothes the naked with a garment.—He takes the poor who are cast out into his house.—He gives deliverance to the captive, and sets at liberty them that are bound.—He undoes the heavy burden, lets the oppressed go free, and breaks every yoke.

Some of you may say, This is a mere rhapsody.—I would answer, These are the words of truth and soberness; all that I have been speaking of is sensibly felt and experienced by the saint in this life: for, when the Lord is graciously pleased to lift up the light of his countenance upon the soul, there is more joy experienced, in such seasons, than if our corn, and wine, and oil, increased—the joy is greater than the joy of harvest, or of one who rejoices when he divides the spoil. There is all joy and peace in believing. The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost.

The reason why this inheritance is called the inheritance of the saints *in light*, I apprehend,

hend, simply to be this. Because all those, who are made meet for this inheritance, have their understandings enlightened; and it is by the spiritual light which breaks in upon their minds that they learn the nature, and receive the earnest, of this inheritance.

II. I come now to the second thing proposed; namely, to consider our meetness for this inheritance.

This meetness, I consider, as twofold—the one wholly *without* us, the other *within* us.—It is meet and right that all those for whom Christ died should share the benefits of his death. It is nothing but strict justice, that those; who were given to Christ—who were chosen in him before the foundations of the world—whose names and nature, whose sins and sorrows, he bore in his own body upon the tree—who were concluded and comprehended in him in every part of his obedient life and meritorious death; should, at the appointed time, be put into the actual possession of that inheritance which is reserved for them, and to which, by virtue of their co-

venant relationship to Christ, they have a claim of right.

This meetness is wholly *without* us; but the meetness my text speaks of is *within* us. The apostle is telling the Colossians that, from the time he had heard of their conversion, he had not ceased to pray for them—and the substance of his prayer for them was, that they might be filled with the knowledge of the Lord's will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding—that they might walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God—that they might be strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering, with joyfulness. And, as he thus *prayed* for them, so likewise he tells them that he *gave thanks* for them to the Father, who, says he, hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: and goes on—"Who hath delivered us
 " from the power of darkness, and hath
 " translated us into the kingdom of his
 " dear Son; in whom we have redemption
 " through his blood, even the forgiveness of
 " sins." Let me ask, Is not the apostle in this
 place

place plainly speaking of a change and deliverance wrought in the soul? Is he not speaking of redemption received and experienced by the forgiveness of sins? I am satisfied for myself that the apostle, in my text, means a meetness wrought *in us*. And, as a sense of our own sinfulness is our only meetness* for receiving grace; so he, who has a sense of God's love, and a capacity for the enjoyment of God wrought in him by the Holy and Blessed Spirit; is meet for glory.

By nature we have no knowledge of God; consequently, we can have no love to him; and no desire after those divine, spiritual, and heavenly, enjoyments which arise entirely from a display of his glory, and a sense of his grace and goodness. If you talk to men in general of the enmity of the carnal mind against God, of the misery and bondage which a soul experiences whilst kept under the law,—shut up in a state of unbelief; if you talk to them of a deliverance out of that state of bondage; of the love of God which was shed abroad in the heart when

* All the meetness he requires,
Is to see our need of him.

HART'S Hymns,
Christ

Christ was first revealed ;—of the preciousness of those seasons which the soul enjoys from a sense of pardoning grace and mercy—this is called enthusiasm. Why ? because they speak evil of those things which they know not ; which they have no desire after ; and which they have no capacity for enjoying. When the vail of ignorance is removed ; when he, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ ; when, in consequence of this, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the power of the Holy Ghost ; then, I say *that very moment*—we are made as meet for the inheritance of the saints in light as ever we shall be†.

If it should be asked, Is there no law work previous to this meetness ? I answer, Yes. St. Paul argues, “ What son is he “ whom the father chasteneth or educateth “ not ? ” “ In like manner,” says the apostle, “ whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he “ receiveth.” The law is our schoolmaster ;

† When we have seen Jesus by the eye of faith, then we are fit to die, as fit as ever we shall be.

ROMAINE'S Notes on Luke ii. 29, 30.

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and every one of God's children, not one excepted, for a time are sent to this school; here they learn to renounce all dependance upon themselves, and utterly to disclaim any goodness or holiness in themselves, in order that they may be made partakers of Christ's holiness.

Some may object to this, and say there is no necessity for a law work. I answer, Whereto then serveth the law? Was it not added because of transgression? Is not the knowledge of sin by the law? Will any man receive Christ as a saviour till he finds and feels himself a lost sinner? Are not all the gracious invitations in God's word addressed to *sensible* sinners? Is not the invitation in Isaiah to those who *thirst*? "Ho, every one that thirsteth." Is not our Lord's invitation to those who are *weary* and *heavy laden*? Will any say that all men by nature are convinced of sin? I acknowledge that men by nature may be so far convinced as to own that they are sinners; but they are not all *spiritually* convinced of sin, *i. e.* of the evil of sin; nor of the sin of their nature. The works of the flesh are manifestly known to be evil; but none can see, by the light of nature,

nature, that the workings of a legal spirit are evil, and that the desire to establish our own righteousness is adding rebellion to sin. We are all sinners by nature and practice; but, instead of confessing our guilt and misery, and acknowledging the justice of our sentence, we all of us, by nature, are going about to justify ourselves; and, instead of crying out for mercy, we endeavour to do something to make satisfaction for the sins past, and vainly suppose that we shall grow better, and do our duty for the time to come. On this account a law work is necessary, that, having the sentence of death in ourselves, we may not trust to ourselves.

It is, I know, objected by some, that, to insist upon any work of the Spirit upon the heart previous to conversion, is to shackle the gospel with conditions, qualifications, and pre-requisites. I answer, that there is no condition insisted upon, on our part, as if it was necessary for us to do any thing. It lies wholly with the Lord to work all our works in us. I only say that this is the way in which God works. No man is alive to God but he who can say with Paul, "I through the law am dead to the law." Such a man

has the work of the law written in his heart ; and such a man knows the nature, end, and use, of the law.

As to qualifications or pre-requisites, let me observe, that no depth of distress can, in any sense, recommend us to God ; but, I must insist upon it, no one can or will come to Christ, except those who have heard and learnt of the Father. Before honour is humility.—The Lord humbles before he honours.—He always imbitters sin to the soul before he gives deliverance from the guilt of it. He makes us, in a measure, feel our misery before he gives us to taste his mercy. None but those who have felt their misery can know how to prize mercy. Those ; who have wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way, and found no city to dwell in, till, hungry and thirsty, their souls were ready to faint within them ; will rejoice should any kind hand lead them forth by a right way, and bring them safe to a city of habitation, where they might have rest and food.

The law is good if a man use it lawfully ; but woe be to them who put it to a wrong use, and call darkness light and light darkness.

ness.. Let the law stand as the ministration of condemnation, revealing the wrath of God against all unrighteousness; let the gospel stand as the ministration of righteousness, and, on that account, the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; for therein the righteousness of God is revealed, from faith to faith.

God will take care that each of these distinct administrations shall have their due honour. If the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious; which glory was to be done away; shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? for, if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory; for, even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth; for, if that which was done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious!

As it respects the work of the law written in the heart; I would not pretend to say how deep the distress must be, nor how long it must

must continue; this only I contend for—that a knowledge of ourselves always precedes a knowledge of Christ;—a sense of misery makes us willing to receive mercy; and, when the law has been set home upon the heart, it will make us rejoice to find and feel that the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death.

Respecting the work of the law written in the heart, I would make another observation, which is this.—Though the believer, as St. Paul says, is dead to the law; so that the law has no just authority over him, either to command or to condemn; nevertheless the lessons, which the soul learnt under that school-master, will be always useful to him. A boy, when taken from school, is no longer under the master's lash, nor the master's eye; but may find the lessons he there learnt useful to him through life. The heir differs nothing from a servant, though lord of all, but is under tutors and guardians till the time appointed of the father; but, when that time is come, he is no longer under their control. The only use the law can be

be of to a believer, is, (not as some say, to shew him when he does right and when he does wrong, but) to shew him that the best action of his life, if brought to that standard, must be condemned; that, consequently, as he received Christ Jesus the Lord, so he must walk in him;—a pensioner upon his bounty,—a debtor to mercy,—a sinner saved by grace alone!—This then is the right use of the law, to shew me what a sinner I am; that I might love that blessed Saviour who has delivered me from the curse of the law, being made a curse for me, and who now, by his blessed Spirit, works in me both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

I would seriously and earnestly exhort you to take heed that ye be not deceived by those, who, in order to make a fair shew in the flesh, endeavour to confound the law and the gospel.

Surely there is a difference between serving in the oldness of the letter and the newness of the spirit, or why does St. Paul speak of such a difference? Let me particularly recommend it to you to attend to this difference. The law is holy; and the commandment

mandment is holy, just, and good; but yet there must be a distinction between obedience to the law and the obedience of faith—between that obedience which is wrought in us by the Spirit of God, and our own personal obedience to any moral precept whatever.—The great thing to be insisted upon is,—the power of the gospel, and the nature of Christ's kingdom as set up in the heart, where Christ alone rules and reigns by the sceptre of grace and truth, and thereby makes and keeps us a willing people. The believer yields obedience to Christ as King in Zion:—and this is the Christian's reasonable service, to present his body a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to the Lord.

From all that has been said, I conclude, that whoever is taught of God—enlightened by his Spirit,—knows the mystery of his will, —is translated from darkness to light,—and is so passed from death unto life that he shall not come into condemnation—must undoubtedly be meet for the inheritance of the saints in light; and, if such a one was to drop down dead the very moment he experienced such a change, he must as surely go to heaven as
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the thief upon the cross, whom our Lord carried with him in his hand as a trophy of victory.

Who shall separate that soul from Christ? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of that sinner whom God hath justified?—If, says St. Paul, it is God who justifieth, who is he that condemneth?—Is not a soul meet for heaven when he is *washed, sanctified, and justified*, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God?—In what sense would you have such a soul to grow in meetness? Is he not born of the Spirit?—Is he not made partaker of a divine nature?—Is he not justified from all things?—Is he not clothed with the righteousness of Christ?—Is he not sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise?—What further meetness do you want?

Some will say he must be more holy—I would ask, is not Christ then perfectly holy?—If Christ is holy, I insist upon it the believer is made a partaker of his holiness.

Some, perhaps, will say—all we mean is, that we must grow in grace.—If this is what you mean, this appears to me very different from

from what is generally understood by growing in meetness; for he, who grows in grace, grows daily more and more out of conceit with himself, and more and more in love with Jesus Christ. He, who grows in grace, feels more and more of his own weakness, and the necessity of being kept by the power of God.—He, who grows in grace, sees more and more of the treachery of his own heart, and the sinfulness of fallen nature; and sees more and more the necessity of applying for fresh supplies of grace, and renewed tokens of God's special favour and loving-kindness.

God forbid that I should deny a growth in grace.—I know I have been charged with it: but I would only say,—it is one thing for me to grow in grace, and another thing for grace to grow in me,—which seems to be the favourite opinion.

I shall answer one objection, and conclude.

It has been asked—If a believer is meet for heaven as soon as he is justified, Why does not God take him home immediately to himself?

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I might

I might give many reasons in answer to this objection; but, if one will not suffice, I do not suppose that many will.

God will ever maintain a church militant upon this earth: this church is made up of believers, who are enlisted under the banners of the cross, and are engaged in the Lord's controversy.—So, then, the believer is left to oppose the enemies of the truth; to testify of the deeds of the flesh, one and all, that they are evil; and to testify of the grace and goodness of God,—as actually received, and sensibly felt and experienced, by the soul in this life.

While some are contending for free-will; good works; personal obedience to the law; unfelt faith; inherent holiness; and perfection in the flesh; others are contending for free, sovereign, and discriminating grace—for a free, full, and finished salvation—for the righteousness of Christ imputed—for the teaching and testimony of the Holy Spirit—for the continued communication of all true holiness from Christ as the head of influence—and for perfection in Christ alone. Some think God's

controversy lies wholly with the profane world:—I am persuaded that it lies as well with the professing world:—in short, it lies with all who are not brought into subjection to Christ, and obedience to the gospel.

I pray God that such of us, who are made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints, may be enabled, by an unblameable conversation, to walk as becometh saints; and to shew forth the high praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into light, not only by our lips but in our lives, giving up ourselves wholly to his service, and walking before him in holiness and righteousness all our days; so that, being made free from sin, and become servants to righteousness, we may have our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

THE END,

PERSEVERANCE,

THE Sinner, who by precious Faith
Has felt his Sins forgiv'n,
Is from that Moment pass'd from Death,
And seal'd an Heir of Heav'n.

Tho' thousand Snares enclose his Feet,
Not one shall hold him fast;
Whatever Dangers he may meet,
He shall get safe at last.

Not as the World the Saviour gives;
He is no fickle Friend:
Whom once he loves he never leaves,
But loves him to the End.

The Spir't, that would this Truth withstand,
Would pull God's Temple down,
Wrest Jesu's Sceptre from his Hand,
And spoil him of his Crown.

Satan might then full Vict'ry boast;
The Church might wholly fall:
If one believer may be lost,
It follows—so may all.

10 EL 58

But Christ in ev'ry Age has prov'd
His Purchase firm and true.
If this Foundation be remov'd,
What shall the Righteous do?

Brethren, by this your Claim abide,
This Title to your Bliss:
Whatever Loss you bear beside,
O! never give up This.

Since the Death of the late Mr. WESLEY, many Controversies having taken place between the Hearers of the late Mr. WHITEFIELD and the Hearers of Mr. Wesley, respecting the Sentiments of each, it has been thought advisable to republish a Letter of the late Mr. Whitefield's, formerly printed in the Year 1752, and sold at the Tabernacle, Moorfields, that all may be enabled to judge for themselves.

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TO THE GODLY IN CHRIST JESUS.

Turn you to the strong-hold, ye prisoners of hope. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

RESPECTING Mr. Hufsey's Treatise on God's Operations of Grace, permit me to say, that in every age Satan has had his engines planted against Mount Zion, "the church of the living God, the beloved city," either to distress or to destroy her. Among others, false apostles, false ministers, false doctrines, were none of the least, in order to pervert the right ways of the Lord, and to turn aside the simple from the paths of understanding.

In the days of the Rev. Mr. Hufsey, the author of this precious and experimental treatise, they abounded. Ministers of Satan transformed into Angels of light, appeared to him more detestable and more dangerous to the church and fold of Christ, than open opposers of the truth as it is in Jesus. Such wolves in sheeps cloathing had crept in unawares, not merely to spy out, but, if possible, to root out the liberties and privileges of the children of God.

These base ends they endeavoured to accomplish, not by fair, open, avowed opposition to the truth, but by holding it in unrighteousness; walking in craftiness, in half-heartedness, and hypocrisy; by feigned words, making merchandize of the simple and their experiences; holding the letter of the word, but denying the spirit of it; holding the form, but denying the power of it: from such he turned away.

Their business was, to aim oblique strokes at Christian experience. "Remove the foundation and what shall the righteous do?" Confound the marks

of

of sound conversion, "so the hope of the righteous is removed like a tree."—These base ends were to be accomplished, by calling an assurance of faith, vain presumption—a good hope, a false notion—communion with Father and Son through the Spirit, forced imagination—repentance unto life, a thing uncertain—an application of the word of life and promise to the soul, fanaticism and delusion;—in short, that a life of faith in the Lamb of God, was not so much to be depended on as a life of doubting—that the love of God shed abroad in the heart, was not sufficient to produce good works, unless slavish fear was mixed with it.

Thus, these arch heralds of Satan attempted to destroy the believer's standing on the Rock of Ages, to tear from his bosom every ground of comfort, and pluck him from his strong holds, by first obliterating the marks of his regeneration, sonship, and interest in Christ; and then, if possible, debase him to the level of their own uncertainties.

Yet, to give a finishing stroke to the whole, brand him with the odious name of Antinomian, while themselves, as enemies to the power of godliness, were the only characters in the world that deserved it.

In opposition to such, and in order to stop the mouths of such betrayers of the flock of Christ, the Lord raised up our author, and caused him to send forth this treatise, on GOD'S OPERATIONS OF GRACE; who, well aware of the craft of his adversaries, was, in the strength of the Lord, enabled to hold forth and defend those truths its enemies had endeavoured to obscure; describing,

The marks, evidences, privileges, difficulties, and temptations of the children of God.

The

GOD'S OPERATIONS
The glory of Christ, in his kingdom, offices, characters, and covenant engagements, &c.

The abiding influence and sufficiency of the Holy Ghost to teach his people, and guide them into all truth.

The privileges of saints, and the portion of hypocrites.

The work of Christ's ministers, and the devices of Satan's messengers.

The sufficiency of Christ, and the insignificancy of every thing short of him.

Now, reader, for your sake as well as my own, I have re-published this; if you know your interest in these things, happy are you. If you do not, be advised; rely on no man's bare word; hear for yourself, read for yourself, pray for yourself, and get a knowledge of your interest in Christ for yourself; such a thing is to be had, and without it religion is vain. "Therefore, prove all things; hold fast that which is good; be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap; for he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." That the latter may be your portion, is the wish of, Your's, &c.

10 FEB 58

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SPIRIT'S TEACHING,
WITHOUT
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